



KSC Countdown

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STS-116 crew returns to KSC Monday for TCDT activities

◆ **Mission Update:** The STS-116 crew members will be at KSC next week for Terminal Countdown Demonstration Test activities. They are expected to arrive on Monday. The three days of training and a simulated launch countdown are the crew's final preparations for launch, scheduled no earlier than Dec. 7.

◆ **ELV Update:** The next NASA ELV launch is THEMIS, Time History of Events and Macroscale Interactions During Substorms. It is a two-year mission comprising five identical probes that will track violent, colorful eruptions near the North Pole. THEMIS is currently scheduled to launch Feb. 15 aboard a Delta II rocket from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. Below is an artist's rendering.



When the five identical probes align over the North American continent, scientists will collect coordinated measurements along the sun-Earth line, allowing the first comprehensive look at the onset of substorms, an avalanche of magnetic

energy powered by the solar wind that intensifies the northern and southern lights such as the aurora borealis. Over the mission's lifetime, the probes should be able to observe some 30 substorms – sufficient to finally know their origin.

■ **VAB Gets Face Lift** — After 40 years of wear and tear, the facility's vertical lift doors are undergoing restoration to support the remaining space shuttle launches and the next generation of launch vehicles. The facility's restoration kicked off in 2003 with a thorough inspection of the vertical lift doors and openings. Since then, workers have been repairing, sandblasting and painting the vertical lift doors in each of high bays 1 and 3, as well as replacing siding, buffers and limit switches. The project is expected to be completed in mid-2009.



■ **Saving Energy** — It takes commitment from everyone at the Spaceport to help KSC and CCAFS save energy dollars; therefore, for the Veterans Day holiday, please remember before leaving work today to:

- ◆ Turn off your computer, monitor and printer (if not required to remain on).
- ◆ Turn off the lights in your office when you are the last person to leave.
- ◆ Turn off the hall and hall closet lights on your way out if you are

THEMIS mission to study auroras over North Pole

the last person to leave your area in the building.

- ◆ Turn off displays and decorative lights.
- ◆ Turn off or unplug any appliances in the office, such as coffee makers, desk lamps, fans, radios, etc.
- ◆ Turn off the copier machines (including hallways) and scanners.
- ◆ Close the blinds on all windows.

■ **NASA Science** — On real-life voyages to the moon and Mars, science fact may end up imitating science fiction, reminiscent of Frank Herbert's epic ecological novel *Dune*. You can read more about it at http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2006/30oct_eclss.htm?list947891.

■ **RehabWorks Closed For Holiday** — The KSC RehabWorks facility will be closed Friday for the Veterans Day holiday. It will reopen on Monday at 7 a.m. For more information or to make an appointment, please call 867-7497 or visit the Web site <http://rehabworks.ksc.nasa.gov/>.

■ **Did You Know ...** November is American Diabetes Month and there is a condition called pre-diabetes? Before developing Type II diabetes, most people have "pre-diabetes" -- blood glucose levels that are higher than normal but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. There are 54 million people in the United States who have pre-diabetes. To quiz your knowledge about diabetes, visit <http://www.diabetes.co.il/>. For more information on pre-diabetes, visit the Web site <http://www.diabetes.org/pre-diabetes.jsp>.

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Find KSC Countdown on the Internet at <http://www.nasa.gov/centers/kennedy/news/countdown/countdown-toc.html>